



STEVEN M. FULOP  
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\*\*\* Press Release \*\*\***

### **Jersey City to Expand Newark Avenue Pedestrian Plaza**

*Will Facilitate More Outdoor Seating for Restaurants; More Open Space Residents; 40 Restaurants Citywide Already Applied for More Outdoor Cafe Seating*

JERSEY CITY – **Mayor Steven M. Fulop** announces the expansion of the Newark Ave Pedestrian Mall to extend outdoor restaurant seating along “Restaurant Row” and safe pedestrian accessibility in an effort to encourage best practices for social distancing during the current global COVID-19 pandemic, as well as support its financially troubled restaurant community.

With the expectation that once the State of NJ lifts restrictions on restaurants they will still include additional rules with limited indoor seating, the city has set a process to expand outdoor seating for restaurants. Since Jersey City announced the application process for more outdoor restaurant seating, the city has already had nearly 40 restaurants apply.

“We’ve worked proactively to think about what our residents and businesses need from us on a city-level to help them recover as quickly as possible,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “The Newark Ave expansion will allow for restaurants to maintain their capacity as indoor seating will be limited. With the weather warming, after nearly 3 months in quarantine, our residents are understandably eager to get outside and enjoy all Jersey City has to offer, and we are prepared to offer that in a way that maintains the health and safety protocols in place.”

"This will benefit the restaurants by giving them room to expand and add seating, and help make up for what they lost over the past few months," said **Rachel Sieg, Executive Director of the Historic Downtown Special Improvement District**. "We've worked with some of the restaurants and they need to prepare. By giving them some guidance now they'll have what they need in place to be fully ready to reopen as soon as the state lifts the restriction."

The Newark Avenue Pedestrian Mall initially opened in 2015. Following its success, the plaza was expanded in 2018, proving to be an economic and cultural boon to the City that has created a place for residents to congregate safely away from automobile traffic and practice social distancing, while also

allowing Restaurant Row to increase outdoor seating and dining options. The Newark Ave section is also getting a facelift to improve aesthetics and make additional room for foot traffic and seating with furniture, pavers, trench drains, and tree plantings. The curb on either side of the permanent plaza will also be removed to allow for a seamless structure for better stroller and wheelchair accessibility.

The Administration has streamlined the process to help local eateries cut through the red tape and obtain temporary outdoor seating permits to offset the loss of indoor seating to comply with social distancing measures. Each business can simply [fill out the form found on the city's website](#) to apply and must meet certain health and safety protocols as well as any additional guidelines the state supplies once the restrictions are lifted.

"We are getting creative to support our small businesses and create space for our residents to enjoy summer safely," said **Ward E Councilman James Solomon**. "The opening of these streets to pedestrians and cafes is a great policy to do just that."

The city is temporarily expanding the boundaries of the Newark Ave Pedestrian Plaza for the summer along Grove street from the south side of First Street to the north side of Christopher Columbus Boulevard, and Grove Street from the south side of Christopher Columbus Boulevard to the north side of Grand Street, which shall be open for northbound vehicular traffic only. All lanes of Christopher Columbus Boulevard shall remain open to traffic for the duration.

"Expanding both the availability of safe public spaces as well as seating areas for restaurants will be a great benefit to our residents and restaurants and the overall community and economy. It's a win-win all around," concluded Mayor Fulop.

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